

## **Greening Cincinnati**

City of Cincinnati Office of Environmental Quality • August 2010

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## What's your next step?

All over Cincinnati, people are making lifestyle changes to be more sustainable. You see them every day – biking, eating fresh local foods, choosing walkable mixed-use neighborhoods in which to live, putting recyclables in the bin, and doing thousands of other things, big and small, to make a difference. Most of us read these words and say, "yes, I'm doing some of those things." To which I say, "Great, glad to have you on the team. The City is making changes to be greener too." The City is rolling out an enhanced recycling program, doing energy efficiency retrofits on dozens of City buildings, and has adopted a new City Bike Plan, to name just a few of the City's changes.

These efforts pay off in many ways. They conserve natural resources, make us less dependent on foreign oil, and bolster our local economy. Perhaps most importantly, they improve our quality of life, individually and collectively. When we focus on relationships more than possessions, on being where we are more than getting somewhere else, on living well rather than living fast, we become healthier and more satisfied with our lives. As our City becomes cleaner, more energy efficient, and more walkable, it develops an energy and vitality that people find attractive. It becomes a place where people want to be. It becomes a place that offers a better quality of life.

But let's be honest. Few if any of us can say that our lifestyle is truly sustainable. We do some things right and some things wrong. We make a concerted effort in some areas of our life and choose not to notice our own blind spots in other areas. We pride ourselves on our accomplishments and rationalize our shortcomings. We are human. And perhaps the City is a bit human too.

Does that mean that efforts to live sustainably are futile? Not at all! It has often been said that sustainability is a journey, not a destination. The measure is not whether each of us is perfect (none of us are), but whether we are better today than we were yesterday, and whether we will be even better tomorrow. We all started in different places, with different strengths and weaknesses, and we are each traveling our own path, determined by the opportunities we encounter and the decisions that we make. The key, perhaps, is to embrace the long-term goal of moving toward sustainability, and to always be on the lookout for your own next step – not what your neighbor or some program is advocating this week – but the change that is right for you.

So, what's your next step? Is there something you can do today to make yourself a little greener than you were? Plant a garden, or make your existing garden a bit bigger? Use durable plates instead of disposable, or use paper cups instead of Styrofoam? Shut off the water while brushing your teeth, or get a car that gets better gas mileage? For each of us, there are a thousand ways to be greener. As a City, we are looking for our next steps. What's your next step?

## **Changes Coming to City of Cincinnati Recycling Program**

Residents will soon have larger recycling containers and an incentive to recycle

The City of Cincinnati will implement an enhanced recycling program this fall that includes:

- Larger wheeled recycling carts
- The RecycleBank incentive program
- Every-other-week collection

This month the City of Cincinnati signed a contract with Cascade Engineering, Inc. to provide Cincinnati residents with larger recycling containers. The majority of residents will receive a 96-gallon cart. Smaller 65-gallon carts will be delivered to smaller households. Carts will be delivered in four zones to all eligible household beginning September 2010. The addresses to be included in each zone will be available on the City's website in late August.

As part of the agreement with Cascade, residents will also have the opportunity to enroll in the RecycleBank program, allowing them to earn rewards for recycling. Rewards come in the form of coupons, gift cards, and discounts for groceries, school supplies, restaurants, coffee shops, and much more. This program, modelled after the rewards program in the credit card and airline industries, has been successful in increasing recycling participation around the country by as much as 50% to 400%.

"The RecycleBank program will bring meaningful value to Cincinnati residents and drive business to our neighborhood business districts," said Larry Falkin, director of the Office of Environmental Quality. "With the addition of the RecycleBank program,

> residents can earn hundreds of dollars in rewards a year just by recycling." Cincinnati's RecycleBank program will be community based, meaning the more the City as a whole recycles the more rewards residents can earn. "We want residents to encourage their neighbors to recycle," Falkin said. (For more information about the rewards

program, see "RecycleBank is Coming to Cincinnati" on page 8.

With the addition of larger recycling containers, recyclables will now be collected every other week, beginning in October. A collection schedule will be affixed to the recycling cart. This modified schedule will save the city about \$700,000 in collection costs, and create less pollution. Rumpke Recycling will continue the collection and processing of the recyclables.

The City of Cincinnati has offered a curbside recycling program to residents since 1989. Currently any City resident living in a single family residence or multi-family residence with City of Cincinnati curbside trash service is eligible for the curbside recycling program. Curbside recycling is available at no additional charge to the resident. To get a bin, or for answers to any recycling questions, call the City's customer service hotline at 591-6000.

Contact: Sue Magness, Recycling Coordinator, City of Cincinnati Phone: 513-352-5332

Email: sue.magness@cincinnati-oh.gov



Office of Environmental Quality sets up recycling information table at Paddlefest to answer questions about the Enhanced Recycling Program and display the new carts. (left is Maura Johnson, a member of the Mayor's Young Professional Kitchen Cabinet. right is Louise Sharrow, OEQ Intern)



### 3rd Annual

# GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE ENERGY FAIR

Tuesday, September 28, 2010
7:30 am until 1 pm
Duke Energy Center

The City of Cincinnati's Employee Energy Fair was such a tremendous success the last two years, we're doing it again. Join local government employees from throughout the region at the City of Cincinnati's "Government Employee Energy Fair". Learn practical ways to reduce your energy at home and at work—and ways to reduce your energy costs! Talk with exhibitors, attend information sessions and participate in interactive hands-on demonstrations! Whether you can spare an hour or two or the entire morning, join us in learning how you can reduce your energy use.

Mark Your Calendar! More Details Coming Soon!

For more information contact the Office of Environmental Quality at

oeg@cincinnati-oh.gov or 513-352-6991

## City Named "Top 10 EECBG City" By US Department of Energy for Energy Services Performance Contract Work

City to save \$1.1 Million annually through energy reduction

It seems the City's work to leverage \$1.1 million worth of Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) funding to implement \$14 million worth of energy saving capital improvements in 69 City-owned buildings, resulting in a guaranteed annual energy savings of \$1.1 million, is getting national attention. The US Department of Energy has named the City of Cincinnati as a "Top 10 EECBG City" and plans to present the award officially in September.

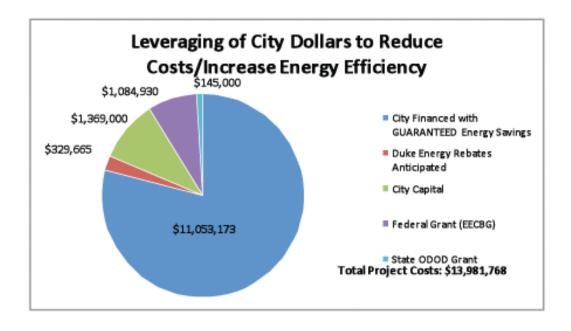
On June 18, 2010 the City's second round of Energy Services Performance Contracts with Ameresco and Honeywell were fully executed. These contracts will allow for the installation of nearly \$8.5 million worth of energy efficiency upgrades in facilities managed by Recreation, Health, Parking Facilities, and Lunken

Airport. These lighting, heating and air conditioning, building automation, and building envelope upgrades will reduce the City's energy use by nearly 6.3 million kWh and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 5,473 metric tonnes each year. The majority of the work will be self-funded with guaranteed minimum annual energy savings of nearly \$650,000 and are expected to be completed by summer 2011. A total of \$750,000 of EECBG funds will be used for gap financing to make these projects work.

In the round 1 performance contracts, implemented in late 2009 and early 2010, the energy services contracts guarantee that the implementation of the energy conservation measures will result in an annual savings of nearly \$430,000. The measurement & verification for round 1 is expected

to begin soon. A written report will be provided to the City that details the actual annual savings. Both contractors believe their savings estimates are conservative and that the annual savings will likely be more than the guaranteed amount. If the savings are less than the guarantee, the contractors will pay the City the difference.

For more information on Performance Contracting or the City's energy-saving projects, contact Bonnie Phillips at 513-352-5310 or bonnie.phillips@cincinnati-oh.gov. For a copy of the City of Cincinnati Energy Services Performance Contracting Fact Sheet go to: http://www.cincinnati-oh.gov/cmgr/pages/-37978-/.



## Federal Stimulus Dollars Helping City Meet Several Important Objectives

Late last year Cincinnati was awarded \$3,520,600 from the Department of Energy (DOE) through the Energy **Efficiency Conservation Block Grants** (EECBG). The grant is being used to fund 8 projects approved by City Council including: Energy Services Performance Contracts for City Buildings, Recycling Enhancements, Green Cincinnati Plan Advocacy, Urban Gardens, Building Codes, energy efficiency retrofits with Greater Cincinnati Energy Alliance, and trail improvements for both the Mill Creek Restoration Project's Queen City-South Mill Creek Greenway Trail and the City's Ohio River Trail.

The projects are varied in nature, but all have the ultimate goal of saving energy and creating jobs at the core of their mission. At the heart of the award is the Green Cincinnati Plan (GCP). This comprehensive sustainability plan, adopted by City Council in 2008, established long-term goals and 80 project recommendations to significantly reduce energy consumption while preserving/ promoting economic development. GCP's recommendations cover 6 topics, including: transportation, energy, waste, land use, food and advocacy. These categories are represented within the projects of the EECBG award as well.

The \$1,265,120 approved for **Energy Services Performance Contracts** has leveraged nearly \$14 million worth of energy improvements in City-owned facilities which will result in nearly \$1.1 million of annual energy savings to the City! While the effort was led by OEQ staff, it was the combined efforts of staff from multiple City Departments

that resulted in the identification of energy saving opportunities in 69 buildings. Their efforts have been recognized by the US Department of Energy- Cincinnati has been picked as one of the ten best EECBG cities in the country for its performance contract work!

The \$832,610 of EECBG funds to be spent for **Recycling Enhancements** will leverage \$3.8M of bond funds. The funds will be used to get larger wheeled recycling carts which will be distributed to every eligible household in the City. Anticipated results include a doubling of recycled material collected and an increase of landfill diversion to 26,000 tons per year. The official roll-out process will begin in Fall 2010.

#### **Green Cincinnati Plan Advocacy**

will receive \$50,000 from EECBG. As the GCP finishes its second year of implementation, the City has continued its commitment to the outlined goals, and will promote the plan with increased vigor, engaging more citizenry to save energy and increase the City's economic viability/vitality. To that end, EECBG dollars will go towards partial funding of a communication and outreach effort.

**Urban Gardens** will grow under the guidance of the Civic Garden Center (CGC). A long time partner with the City and champion of community gardening, the CGC will work closely with OEQ to identify and develop urban agriculture in the area. Expanding upon 6 original sites, EECBG funds (\$75,000) will be used to establish and enhance urban agriculture locations.

The **Building Codes** project is using \$50,000 of EECBG dollars to create a web-based educational resource to inform the construction community about Code requirements and the positive benefits of energy efficient building standards. So far they have purchased books on energy efficiency for the Resource Center at 3300 Central Parkway, generated information for the website, and created an advisory committee. They will be gathering information about other cities, working with other organizations and hope to do the first workshop this fall.

The purpose of the **Greater Cincinnati** Energy Alliance (GCEA) is to lead the tri-state effort in energy efficiency retrofits in all (non-government owned) buildings. Building owners can save 25-30% in energy costs with cost-effective retrofits that pay for themselves with their energy savings. GCEA has canvassed the City's Neighborhood Enhancement Program area of Mt. Washington, providing residents with compact fluorescent light bulbs, and promoting energy audits in the neighborhood. GCEA also launched their non-profit pilot program, where financial incentives will be awarded for organizations to undertake energy efficiency retrofits. The City has contributed \$604,000 of its EECBG award towards this mission.

Mill Creek Restoration Project's Queen City-South Mill Creek Greenway Trail is utilizing \$100,000 of EECBG dollars to work on Phase II of the trail. An economic analysis of the trail's impact has been completed, along with utility

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#### FEDERAL STIMULUS DOLLARS: FROM PAGE 5

and property surveys. Preliminary landscape and engineering designs, along with geotechnical analysis will also be part of this Phase of the project. Mill Creek was able to use EECBG dollars to leverage a Clean Ohio Trail Fund grant for an additional \$500,000! Once completed, the 3.4 mile long trail will be a key component of the City's Mill Creek Greenway Program and link nearby residential neighborhoods, business districts, Salway Park and scenic Spring Grove Cemetery and Arboretum. For more information about Mill Creek Restoration Project go to: http://www.millcreekrestoration.org/

The **Ohio River Trail** will ultimately run along the Ohio River from Lunken airport to the City's urban core. Cincinnati is using \$400,000 worth of EECBG funds for the ninth segment of the Trail which runs from Corbin to Collins. Work will include preparation of environmental assessment documents and preliminary engineering designs. This Trail sub-segment will extend the existing one-mile section, which goes from Corbin Street to Congress Avenue. For more information on Bike Trails in the City go to: http://www.cincinnati-oh.gov/bikes/trails.htm

For information on all the City's projects funded by the American Recovery Reinvestment Act (ARRA), go to: http://www.cincinnati-oh.gov/noncms/projects/stimulus/arra\_grants.cfm

### Streetcar Project receives \$25M Grant

The Cincinnati Streetcar project took a huge leap forward with the award of a \$25 million grant from the federal government. With close to 90% of the cost of the streetcar project committed through a combination of local, state and federal sources, the project is slated to begin by the end of this year and be completed by 2013. Read more here or go to http://www.urbancincy.com/2010/07/cincinnati-wins-25m-urban-circulator-grant-for-modern-streetcar-project/.

Improved transit is a cornerstone of the Green Cincinnati Plan and the Streetcar is an important piece of an expanded Cincinnati Transit system. Although relatively modest reductions in greenhouse gas emissions come from moving trips from cars to the streetcar, the denser settlement patterns the streetcar investment makes possible can lead to significant reductions in greenhouse gases.

## Receipt of \$6 Million of Clean Ohio Grant Funding Critical to Completing Brownfield Redevelopment Projects In City

Two prime redevelopment properties within the limits of the City of Cincinnati will be cleaned up and readied for redevelopment thanks to the Clean Ohio Revitalization Fund, otherwise known as CORF. The City was awarded a \$3 million CORF grant for the Providence North site, located adjacent to the Sam Adams Brewery in the West End. The grant funding will be used for site acquisition, asbestos abatement, building demolition, and

soil/groundwater remediation. Once the work is completed, the Sam Adams Brewing Company plans to expand their operations on this neighboring property.

Hamilton County and the Port of Greater Cincinnati Development Authority were awarded a \$3 million CORF grant for the former Kahn's/ Sara Lee site in Camp Washington. The grant funding will be used for remediation and demolition. The City has committed to fund an additional \$400,000 of project demolition costs. Micro Metal Finishings, LLC, the committed end user of the site, will retain 50 jobs and create 25 additional jobs. They will utilize approximately 3 acres of the property and will stimulate redevelopment on the remaining 14 acres.

## **Bicycle Transportation Program**

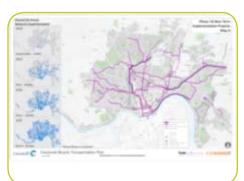
The mission of the City of Cincinnati Bicycle Transportation Program is to "make bicycling an integral part of daily life in Cincinnati, so that persons of all ages and abilities utilize bicycles for all types of trips". Over the past several months there has been a lot of activity in the Department of Transportation and Engineering (DOTE) as they worked to bring biking more into the mainstream of City life. From creating, unveiling and approving the new updated Bicycle Master Plan to installing several bike parking opportunities and passing a safe distance law, the City is moving full steam ahead in reaching their goals.

#### **Master Plan**

In June DOTE presented the final report of the Cincinnati Bicycle Transportation Plan before City Council. Culminating a process that began in 2009, the Plan includes recommendations on moving forward with creating 329 miles of on-street infrastructure including bike lanes & sharrows. The evolution of the Plan included lots of public participation, evaluation of existing infrastructure and development of proposed networks, policies and programs. Citizen volunteers played a key role in assisting DOTE in the process and were rewarded by City Council approving the Plan. Over the next eighteen months improvements will begin on Madison Road, Spring Grove Avenue and Riverside Drive. Pump up those tires, put on your bike helmet and get out there!

To see the Plan go to: http://www.cincinnati-oh.gov/bikes/bike\_plan.html

To get maps of current Bike Routes or bike rack locations in the City go to: http://www.cincinnati-oh.gov/bikes/bike\_maps.html



#### **Bike Corral**

One immediate outcome of the Bike Plan brainstorming sessions was the installation of the first "bike corral" in the region. Installed in April 2010, the corral is located in the heart of Northside's business district at the corner of Hamilton Avenue and Lingo Street. Space effective, it can accommodate 12 bicycles within one parking space, and removes bicycles from creating problems on already narrow sidewalks.



#### **Bike Parking in Garages**

Cincinnati Planning Commission approved a new bicycle parking ordinance that will require all new or expanded parking garages to provide bicycle parking. For every 20 parking spaces within the garage, there will need to be 1 bike space provided, with a maximum total of 24. The spaces to accommodate bikes must be located

in the garage, protected from weather and have a way to secure the bike. The picture below is representative of what the Department of Transportation hopes garages will do per the ordinance.



#### **Safe Distance Law**

On June 23, 2010 City Council approved a 3-foot passing law requiring cars to leave a safe distance (3 feet) when passing cyclists. The ordinance also prohibits driving or parking a car in a bike lane and requires drivers to exercise caution in opening doors to avoid endangering bicyclists. This should provide an opportunity to educate motorists within the City, and provide cyclists the room they need to ride safely.

#### **Future Biking News:**

There are plans to include a Bike Center at the Central Riverfront Park that will include lockers, a repair facility, showers and connection to the riverfront trail systems. Keep your eyes open for progress on this!

#### More information:

City of Cincinnati Bicycle
Transportation Program: http://www.
cincinnati-oh.gov/bikes/
Bicycle Organizations: http://www.
cincinnati-oh.gov/bikes/organizations.
html

## City's Internal Environmental Compliance Audits Continue

Over the past year, OEQ staff has performed environmental compliance audits at 67 City facilities, resulting in 278 environmental compliance findings. Such findings mainly centered on air pollution, asbestoscontaining building materials, industrial wastewater, stormwater, solid waste, hazardous waste, infectious waste, hazard communication, used oil management, spill prevention plans, hazardous chemical inventory reporting, and underground storage tanks.

To help meet the City's compliance obligations, OEQ is providing the

following consulting services to several City departments:

- Assisting nine City facilities with their Hazardous Chemical Inventory Reporting (required under the Emergency Planning and Community-Right-to-Know Act),
- Assisting nine other facilities in obtaining their required air pollution permits,
- Helping facilitate the proper disposal of hazardous materials from several city worksites,

- Assisting several more facilities in obtaining infectious waste generator certification, and
- Assisting several departments with identifying asbestos containing building materials.

For more information on the City's internal Environmental Audit Program, please contact Matt Mullin at matt. mullin@cincinnati-oh.gov or 513-352-5344.

## **New Sustainability Coordinator**



Steve Johns recently accepted the position of Sustainability Coordinator in the City of Cincinnati's Office of Environmental Quality. As coordinator, Steve will help implement the strategies identified in the City's Green Cincinnati Plan.

"My environmental journey began with the Rice University Recycling Club – as you can imagine recycling was not on the cutting edge of environmentalism in Texas during the late 1980s," said Johns. He continued, "It just goes to show you how far we have come in twenty short years. Now people want to know more about my human powered lawn mower, compost tumbler and collapsible rain barrels."

Steve previously served as the Executive Director of Citizens for Civic Renewal (CCR) – a non-profit dedicated to empowering citizens and serving as a catalyst for civic action in Greater Cincinnati. His prior experience includes jobs with planning agencies in Maryland, Ohio, Alabama and Texas. Steve also worked as an environmental engineer. Steve feels the experience of living and working in several regions of the country has broadened his knowledge about varying approaches to protecting the environment. Over time Steve has become more and more interested in public relations' role in engaging citizens and challenging them to create plans for the future.

Steve counts as one of his greatest accomplishments the Electronic Town Hall Meeting held for Hamilton County's Community COMPASS (Comprehensive Master Plan And StrategieS) where 1,000 people participated in an all day strategic planning meeting. More recently Steve, through his work at CCR, helped Agenda 360 solicit input from 1,500 citizens of our region.

"Community engagement and protecting the environment go hand-in-hand. When people get involved in shaping their future, they almost always include ways to protect and conserve their environment," said Johns.

Steve is a native of Wilmington, Delaware. He now lives in Hyde Park with his wife, Kristen, and two young daughters. His interests include travel, gardening, and good food and drink.

## **Net-Zero Energy Home in Northside**

Local home builder Potterhill Homes recently unveiled a model home in the City of Cincinnati's Northside neighborhood that reinforces the notion that going green and saving green dollars goes hand in hand. The model home represents a development where homes are available for between \$150,000 and \$200,000 and geothermal heating and cooling and solar panel systems are available options. With a Renewable Energy Credit from Duke Energy homeowners can expect to eliminate their utility bills. With houses in the development eligible for the City of Cincinnati's 10-year tax abatement and 15-year abatement for those wanting to have their homes LEED-certified – saving green is easier than ever. The project is also an example of how The Green Cincinnati Plan's Energy Task Team Recommendation for Photovoltaic Energy is being implemented. Read more here or go to http://www.building-cincinnati.com/2010/06/potterhill-unveils-affordable-net-zero.html



## **More Local Food Options**

Food trucks popular on the West Coast have arrived in the Midwest. Food trucks are making their appearance in Cincinnati as vendors like Café de Wheels and Señor Roy's Taco Patrol have sprung up in Downtown and places like the Northside Farmers Market. These new businesses are bringing freshly prepared food and new vegetarian options to our City. Read more here or go to http://news.cincinnati.com/article/20100622/LIFE01/6230312/The-fascination-with-food-trucks.

The good folks at Melt Eclectic Deli have opened a new venture in Picnic and Pantry, a micro market and specialty foods store. With a focus on organic and local foods – as well as some prepared foods – P&P is another great addition to the culinary choices along Hamilton Avenue. Read more here or go to http://www.picnicandpantry.com.

Encouraging people to eat local and organic foods is one of the goals of the Food Task Team of the Green Cincinnati Plan.

## **RecycleBank is Coming to Cincinnati**

This fall the City of Cincinnati is bringing you RecycleBank -- an exciting new recycling rewards program. Already recycling? You'll soon be rewarded for it! If not, now is a great time to start!

RecycleBank is a rewards program that motivates people to recycle. Over 1 million residents in over 20 different states are currently participating in RecycleBank's simple, three-step process: Recycle, Redeem, Reward.

Over the course of the next six months, Cincinnati residents who have City of Cincinnati curbside trash service will receive brand-new recycling carts. These recycling carts are larger than the bins currently used, so that all recyclable materials may be placed into one convenient wheeled container. Rumpke will weigh the amount collected at the material recovery center on Vine Street in St. Benard. RecycleBank Points will be awarded based on the quantity collected along each route.

Registering with RecycleBank to redeem the rewards, for things like groceries, apparel, and merchandise from hundreds of local and national businesses and retailers, is easy to do. Each resident will receive detailed information in the mail from Mayor Mark Mallory and RecycleBank. Each household who participates on a

regular basis is expected to receive \$200 to \$300 worth of rewards per year from partners like LaRosa's, Dewey's, Izzy's, Bonbonnary, Aveda Salon, Nature Made, Coca-Cola, CVS/ pharmacy, Huggies, McDonald's, Bed Bath & Beyond, Dick's Sporting Goods and others. Local partners so far include Half Price Books. Pipkin's Market, Park + Vine, Champs Entertainment and more. In the coming months, RecycleBank will work to get additional local businesses involved in the rewards program. RecycleBank Points can also be donated to local schools. The more you and your neighbors recycle, the more you get rewarded. It's that easy!

## Air Quality Enforcement - No News is Good News

So far in 2010, the City has initiated no enforcement actions under the City's Air Quality Regulations.

The Office of Environmental Quality shares responsibility for enforcing the City's Air Quality Regulations with the Health Department, Law Department, and the Hamilton County Department of Environmental Services (HCDOES). When a resident calls the Air Quality Complaint Hotline (513-946-7777) to report an offensive odor or other air quality problem, an inspector from HCDOES responds (24/7), verifies the complaint, and attempts to trace the problem to its source. If the source of the odor or other problem is identified, the source is notified of the City's regulations and voluntary cooperation is requested to eliminate the problem. In most cases, the source cooperates, ceases the offensive discharge, the discharge does not reoccur, and no further action is taken by the City or County. If the source of the offensive discharge is unwilling or unable to stop the discharge, or if the discharge reoccurs causing a pattern of complaints, the City can and does enforce its regulations by assessing fines, ordering the discharge to cease, or seeking an injunction.

While the City has initiated numerous enforcement actions for Air Quality violations since the regulations were adopted in 2004, there have been no instances in 2010 or the second half of 2009 involving parties that fail to stop an offensive discharge when requested, and no recurring patterns of offensive discharges.

OEQ remains vigilant to ensure that residents are not subjected to offensive odors and other preventable air quality problems, and congratulates the regulated community for its excellent recent track record.

## **SAVE THE DATE Second Annual 3E SUMMIT**



Tuesday, September 28th 7:30 am - 1 pm • Duke Energy Convention Center

Registration and Details at www.3esummitcincinnati.org Sponsorship/exhibitor opportunities: Contact Steve Johns 513.352.6911 or steve.johns@cincinnati-oh.gov

The Energy, Economics and Environment Summit is a Green Cincinnati Plan initiative.